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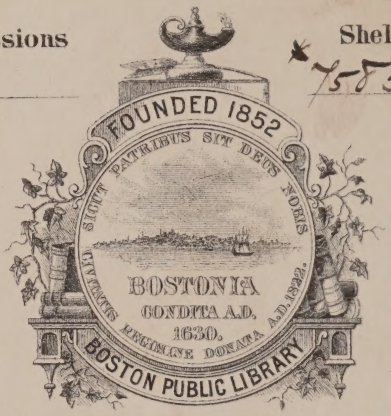

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ANNUAL ADDRESS,

BEFORE THE

Massachusetts Temperance Society,

DELIVERED

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BY REV. T. M. CLARK,
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ADDRESS.

We are sometimes told, that the subject of temperance is exhausted, the friends of the cause have told their story, and no new dangers remain to be delineated, no new motives to be urged.

I know not that any novel statements are to be looked for in the present stage of this subject, the investigation of the evil has been so thorough, and the exertions to spread light and knowledge so untiring. But so long as there is a living witness to the ruin of intemperance, so long as one moral being remains exposed to the seductions of this temptation, the subject is not exhausted.

The topic is familiar, and the success has been great—and did the friends of temperance need such a stimulus, we might pause here to offer them our hearty congratulations upon the result of their exertions—but, while in yon stately edifice there is a fountain of poison flowing unceasingly from morning till midnight—while, in almost every street of your city, there are buildings dedicated to vice, with open doors enticing your children to bewilder their reason and brutify their nature in the maddening cup—while there remains an army of drunkards amongst us so numerous and so strong, that they have power

to carry ruin and misery through the length and breadth of our land—while there lives a father, or a mother, or a child exposed to this dark and subtle evil, our task is not finished.

I do not propose, on this occasion, to detail the physical evils of intemperance; this work has been well and thoroughly performed; the physician and chemist have told you facts in this connection, which have forced you to turn with loathing from the poisonous draught. Neither do I purpose to enter upon the statistics of crime, of waste, of political evil which the statesman and the economist may so much better delineate. The prison, the alms-house, the court-room, the refuge of the sick and the insane, have uttered a voice, which ought long ago to have reached the conscience and the practice of every enlightened man in this community.

Neither would I enter upon ground for disputation, but, on this anniversary occasion, I would endeavor to lead your minds where no prejudice, no party feeling, no hostile difference ought to follow us.

I take it for granted, in the outset, that every man in this audience is honest in the desire to find out the secret of the evil, and its remedy. I assume that every man here, when he is informed upon the subject, when he is able to understand the moral principles which bear upon the question, shall be willing to act upon his convictions of duty.

Intemperance is a violation of the great principle of self-control; it is the unlawful gratification of an appetite or passion; it is an incentive to other sins, often their proximate cause; it is the destruction of the laws of our moral being.

Self-control is the one principle, which puts a difference between the holy and the unholy, the clean and the unclean. It is the principle which separates the two great parties which divide the whole moral creation. One accountable being yields to the passion of the moment, and he sinks into the ranks of the fallen; another accountable being erects himself above that passion, and acts with reference to a future hour, and he is raised to be one among the redeemed and holy.

Let me explain why I start with these definitions. The reason of our existence in this world is not that we may eat, or drink, or be merry, or get gain, or make us a high name—but that we may regulate our moral nature, and prepare it for an eternal existence. Intemperance strikes at the very root of this design; it cuts off its victim at once and forever from the ability to fulfil his real end of being. The day in which you lose the power of self-control and moral discipline, you drop from your fit place in the rank of God's creatures. This evil reverses the very purpose of the Almighty in our creation, and converts this world, which was fitted up to be a school for heaven, into a foul dungeon of beastliness, disease, and death.

Will any detail of physical evils deepen the horrible enormity of intemperance, in view of this awful consideration?

And shall not every thing, which tends directly or indirectly to induce the danger of this vice, be shunned by all, who understand the reason of their existence, and would secure the happiness of their being?

I. I would, in the first place, present some illustrations of the process, by which the evil of intemperance is fastened upon its victim.

You have heard much of the dangers of the convivial meeting, of the open, obtrusive bar-room, of the poor man's cheap glass and the rich man's costly wines, and the half has not been told you; but after all, these are but the instruments of temptation. There is something wrong in the soul, something lying back of these outward temptations, to which they appeal, and which makes them so dangerous. There has been some influence at work in the world, which has called into being an unnatural, unhealthy, and sinful love of excitement; there has been something in the habits, or the institutions, or the education of society, which has developed very extensively this condition of feeling and action, and there is not a department in politics, morals, or religion, which has not felt this influence to its hurt.

At the moment, when the young man throws himself upon

the arena of business, you see this feeling beginning to work, you see it in the feverish excitement with which he plans and executes his stated business, you see it in the character of his pleasures, and if you could get within the walls of his heart, you would see it in the images of his morbid fancy, in the schemes, the hopes, the fears, the disappointments, which rapidly chase each other across his troubled mind.

This appetite of the soul craves for food, and there is an easy, though somewhat brutish way, in which it may be gratified; there is an expeditious and cheap method for heightening the glowing image of fancy, and exciting the nerves of the heart. There is a poison at hand, which pleases though it kills.

The current literature of the age is very much to blame for this evil.

A book is a companion, whose society may be had at all times, whom we may take to our bosom, and the world shall know it not. It is a companion, with whom, once received to our confidence, an unbroken amity may continue; it always tells the same tale, it betrays no confidence, it always enforces one set of principles. If evil, it never repents, it never strives to undo the mischief it has caused; it goes on in its work of moral destruction, undeterred by any compunctious visitings; it has no conscience. There are but few writers, who will venture undisguisedly to attack the citadels of morality and religion, and therefore error now comes to us robed in garments of light, the skeptic and the sensualist have

> "Stolen the livery of the court of heaven,
> To serve the devil in."

These works are especially dangerous, because there is in them just enough of good to make the bad palatable; the consequences of vice may be reprobated as dangerous and unsatisfying, but the picture is drawn so much from life, and colored so richly, and emblazoned with such gorgeous ornaments, that the pretended moral is forgotten, while the fancy and the heart linger about the scene of pleasure, till its corruption sinks deep into the soul.

This topic cannot be out of place here, because our community is a reading community, and there is a mass of popular poets and novelists, whose works, indirectly and quietly, have done more to hinder the advance of the temperance reform, than all the opposition of noisy, open adversaries could ever effect. The jocose, apologizing manner in which the revelries of the besotted are delineated, the charm of sentiment, and poetry, and chivalry which they throw over the bacchanalian orgies, the light familiarity with which they speak of habits fatal as the grave to their victim, the strong appeal which is made to our corrupt appetites, the gentlemanly ridicule and well-bred contempt with which they slide over the labors and plans of those who would break up the fountains of vice,—here is a current of influence, running under the foundations of society, which you may not so readily take knowledge of, but which is the more dangerous, because it is unseen and unappreciated.

Now, though not a single overt act of sin may have been committed, still we would assert, that when the mind gives itself up to the influence of such associations as these works tend to excite, the first stage in the man's downward progress is accomplished, and he is fitted, by these solitary communings, to receive other evil influences, and to yield to outward temptation. The power of the social principle next comes in to weaken the ability of self-control, and accelerate the work of destruction.

No intimacy can exist between man and man for any length of time, unless a mutual influence be felt from such communion and sympathy. It is by the established constitution of nature, that mind acts upon mind, example prompts to imitation; the simple presence of the holy man often restrains the impious, and again, familiarity with the vicious lessens our abhorrence of vice. And yet, in a matter so vitally important as the choice of associates, but few of our youth exercise any degree of carefulness, the chance of the hour, the fancy of the moment decides a matter, whose influence reaches us for good or for evil through an endless existence.

In describing the spiritual progress through which the victim of vice is made to pass, we would here remind you that the influence of evil associates is so gradual and so subtle in its first stages, that the sufferer is not aware that any change is at work within his soul, the influence is not readily perceived, and hence the extreme danger.

The moral constitution is affected by the polluted atmosphere which the doomed man is led to breathe, he has inhaled the contagion, the seed of death has been sown,—but no sharp pang of disease has yet shot through his frame, no wasting away of strength has yet been felt, his hand does not tremble, his eye is not glazed, his brow does not throb, and though his reason is beginning to be shattered, his conscience to be bewildered, and his heart to be brutified, he is yet an unconscious victim.

The young man goes forth into the world, and he finds the customs of society inexorable as the law of the Mede; he, who would fearlessly brave the cannon's mouth, shrinks from the condemnation of public opinion; the cool insinuation, the quiet laugh, the contemptuous enquiry will often shake that holy determination, which, in other days, would have sent the man to a martyr's fiery death, with a palm in his hand, and a song of victory upon his lip.

It is not necessary that evil associates shall put forth positive exertion to entrap the uninitiated; it is sufficient that such be induced to mingle, as spectators, in the scene of unhallowed revelry; there is a law of sympathy written upon the heart, that will compel him who thus tampers with temptation, to yield. Fallen spirits could not find a resting place in heaven, and sinless angels could no better breathe the atmosphere of hell.

Would that the young men of this community might be brought to feel that there is some knowledge which requires too great a sacrifice for them to pay! How many victims the knowledge of the world has sacrificed!

You have seen a youth, whose early days were opened with prayer and closed with thanksgiving—whose heart, in the days

of childish simplicity, had been easily moved by the sight of suffering, to acts of holy, self-denying charity—whose soul had caught the inspiration of many a sacred hour, when a father's hand pointed the way to heaven, and a mother's hushed petition went up for the child of her love. You have seen him go forth from the home of piety and happiness, to try the portion of the world, to learn the ways of men, to get knowledge if not understanding, to mingle with the generation of evil-doers, and be undone forever! For his hours of relaxation, which were once passed in the occupations and healthy amusements of his family circle, a poisonous, exciting literature is at hand; for his society, a class of unhallowed associates present themselves, and then from the social glass, he passes to the solitary cup, and from the solitary cup, to the shameless public exposure of his infirmity, and the prospect of his life is dimmed forever. The sun, in the hour of his rising, passes under the cloud.

And now follow that youth, whom, but as yesterday, you saw come forth in health and innocent joy from the home of his infancy,—follow him down to his early and suicidal grave. Follow him, you, who heedlessly expose your children to the machinations of the vicious, and circle them round with no restraints, even though they breathe in an atmosphere of death. Follow him, you, whose feet have just begun to slide down that precipice, where his strong frame was shattered, and his soul brought low. Follow him, ye, who lay the snare to decoy the innocent, "who weave the winding-sheet of souls;" follow your poor victim! walk to the grave between his gray-haired father, and his old, broken-hearted mother, and when they lay down the lifeless body to sleep in its last, still resting place, remember, that its narrow house, narrow though it be, you shall one day share, and after death—*the judgment!*

I have asserted that every thing, for time and for eternity, depends upon the habit of self-control. I have assumed that intemperance strikes at the foundation of this habit. I have selected for illustration, one amongst the various processes by which this evil gains its tyrannical power over a moral being.

Before leaving this part of my subject, there is one additional consideration, to which I would ask your special attention.

If the man of active business would be secure, let him guard himself in the hours of relaxation. The moral, the spiritual character is formed mainly when the season of leisure comes, and the man is left to himself, or to the influence of social life. Not that he shall shut himself out from amusement and social intercourse, not that he shall toil from break of day till midnight with no interval of rest,—the business part of this American community is now too exclusively a *business* community. One reason of the great prevalence of intemperance amongst us, may undoubtedly be traced to the fact, that we too little understand the fireside comforts and amusements of domestic life, and, as a people, have cultivated the ornamental arts, and our taste for the beauties of nature, but too sparingly.

The caution which we would enforce, is this,—that we remember that the unnoticed, seemingly unimportant habits of action and thought, which mark the hours and half hours of our leisure *make* the moral character, and if we begin to seek after feverish, spasmodic excitements to keep that leisure from becoming a burden, we have no security, but that our reason, our conscience, and our bodies shall be wrecked.

And these considerations reach with still greater force the man of a studious, meditative life. The professional man, to be worthy of his profession, must for life, be a student. "He must learn to live alone." He must be taught and cheered and excited by the voices of those, who, being dead, yet speak. He must make his work a delight, or that work cannot be well performed. He must go to his task, not as a task, but with a healthful, glowing pleasure, or he will find that he has chained himself down to an intellectual servitude. But still the mind must be under very peculiar and thorough discipline, which can *always* find satisfaction in the routine of study. There will be hours of mental torpor, of morbid dulness, when that sickening stupor comes over the mind, so vividly described by one, who was almost blasted by its influence, as

"A grief without a pang,
A drowsy, stifled, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief
In word, or sigh, or tear."

At such a season, it is not that we feel any physical inability to labor, but the great cord of the soul seems motionless, and we know that if that cord could once be struck, if *one* vibration could be excited, the whole action of the mind would be restored. Well, we believe that this moving cord can be reached, and for a season, it is true, that the mind may be forced to act by the application of an unnatural stimulant. This is, for the moment, the easiest way to accomplish the desired object; but observe that the same morbid condition of mind only returns again the sooner, and being again relieved by the intoxicating poison, the alternate depression and stimulation goes on, till the rash remedy has deranged every wheel, and corroded every spring, and unhinged every weight, and confused every balance of the delicate and complicate machinery of the human soul!

II. Our limits will not allow us to dwell any longer upon the process of intemperance, and I shall occupy your attention but a few moments, in the consideration of the results of this fatal process. I do not know that it is possible to exhibit in any language the physical evils resulting from intemperance, so that the picture shall be realised. A single visit to your houses of correction, your alms houses, and your prisons, will be to you a more impressive sermon, than any which ever saluted your ear. And when you have gone through the cells of the prison, when you have visited the rooms of the poor, and sick, and dying, when you have stolen a look into the cage of the raving maniac, remembering all the while, that these creatures were made in God's own image, and might have been as prosperous and happy as yourself had it not been for sin, and are then told, that drunkenness was in almost every case, the cause of that sin, the occasion of that wretchedness,—you will feel as you never felt before, what we mean, and by what we are influenced, when we call upon the community to put out the fires of this damning scourge.

But there is one evil, not so often exhibited to our special view, which ought not to be forgotten. I mean the loss of moral power, which the land suffers from the ruin caused by intemperance.

Let me illustrate this evil by a single fact.

Something like half a century ago, in the university of an adjoining state, there studied a young man of rich and glowing genius, ready and eloquent in speech, of retentive and accurate memory, and with a mind well stored with various learning. He entered upon his profession as a lawyer with high hopes and the most flattering prospect of success. The early exhibition of his professional skill and his immediate advancement to posts of honor in the councils of state, led the community in which he lived, to look to him as the probable candidate at some future day for the chief magistracy in his native state.

His companions at this time were of that class, whose genius and scholarship and wit entitled them to become leaders in society; and here we leave this young man, thus gifted and thus prospered; and remembering what must be the hopes, the warm fancies, the high, the enthusiastic, the joyous dreams of such a youth, we pass from the morning to the evening of his life.

A few years since, I saw a white-haired old man, pale, haggard, careworn, and yet somewhat venerable in his demeanor —ragged, and yet not in a common beggar's garb, walking the streets exhibiting a miserable, obscene bird, to get for himself the means to buy his daily bread. I saw him hooted by the young, and I saw, how the old passed him by on the other side. I heard him ask for a cast off garment to protect his aged limbs from the cold. I knew, after this, how he would sometimes steal a place, where he might lay his feeble head at night-fall. It was that gifted youth, and this was the change which half a century had wrought!

In the early years of his profession, he had been led to do a deed, which brought shame and disappointment upon him, and he sought to quench the fire of remorse in the intoxicating cup. From that hour his strength departed from him. His mind had

become a ruin, and yet there were columns and broken arches standing yet, which told how noble a temple once stood there. And at times across the old man's soul, there would flash a shadow of the past, shadows of the thoughts and imagery of his youth, and as he caught a glimpse of his now blanched locks, and withered form, and tattered garb, for a moment his heart would sink within him. But the vigor of his mind had been long decayed, its balance deranged, his moral perceptions destroyed; and he had become a weak, drivelling old man, contented to live, as the beast—and to die, as the beast dieth. And now he sleeps in an unhonored, unnoticed grave.

My friends, when you hear that a great and good man has gone to his rest, why do you mourn? Why does a nation clothe herself in sackcloth, when her benefactors sink into the grave? Tears are not shed for the departed, he has gone to his reward, and his works do follow him. You mourn for the loss of moral power, which the land has suffered by his death, you lament the absence of his influence and example. But who mourns for the loss of moral power, which we suffer through the ruin of intemperance? I have given but a single example of this loss, but there is not a department in church or state, but would furnish a multitude of such illustrations. How many great men have fallen in our land! How often have the strongest energies of the mind been blasted! And not only have the stern, inflexible powers of the soul been overturned, but the more delicate affections have, too, all been withered! The storm, which has scathed the rock-bound summit, has not spared the fragile and bending flower which bloomed upon the mountain's side.

The desolation reaches every part of the moral and intellectual man, it dries up the current of thought, it crushes every sympathy, and kills even the germ of religious life.

I know that very much has been said upon this subject, but that the extent of the evil is not yet fully realized, is evident from the fact, that the whole community has not risen up in its might, and declared that the instruments of the evil shall exist no longer.

Unless you take the pains to inform yourself upon the subject, or unless the tide of ruin dashes against your own door post, you will not be likely to *feel* the danger.

But if the evil reached us in some more direct form, if, once in every year, a messenger should be sent to visit every town and village in our land, to select out a certain proportion of men, and women, and children, to make up a great band of slaves for the use of a despotic tyrant; and if, of this enslaved band, thirty thousand should every year be sent down to a shameful grave,—would the millions of freemen in the land live on, in quiet sufferance of the foul oppression?

Or if, every year, emissaries should be sent forth to travel through the land, with enticing and lying words, to induce the unwary to buy and consume some noxious drug, fatal to the life of both spirit and body, would the law let these men alone?

Or if, you could in one conception, be made to comprehend the misery, the agonies, the shame, the gradual extinction of moral and intellectual life, which *one* human soul passes through, before it can go from the sunny height down into the dark depths of foul corruption,—if all the fitful resolutions, the hurried prayers, the solemn vows, the wretched hours of suspense and doubtful combatings between temptation and virtue, the tears and groans of remorse, could be put into one picture, there is not a man in this assembly, but would ever after clasp his teeth,

"And not undo 'em,
To suffer wet damnation to run through 'em."

What a solemn lesson would it read to us, if we could go down into the recesses of a great and noble mind, and study there the process of ruin, through which that mind goes to destruction! to mark the cloud gradually roll up and gather its sable folds over that reason, once so mighty, whose operation once thrilled us with such awe—to watch the fires of holy affection one by one go out—to see the purity and quiet innocence of that soul each day more and more polluted—to witness its startling convulsions, as the mind strives ever and anon to shake off the deadly influence, under which it is fast sinking

into a moral grave—and, finally, to watch the calm, the stagnant calm of spiritual death steal over the soul, to observe how quietly at last the victim lies down to die, quietly because a *moral mortification* has begun within him—O, my soul, come not thou into this secret!

But where lies the remedy for this great evil? You answer, in the principle of entire abstinence from the means of intoxication.

Very true—but I ask, how shall the community be led to adopt this principle?

It may be replied, that the moral and philosophical causes of intemperance must be fully detected, and a cure effected by removing those causes.

The recommendation of the principle of entire abstinence, its simple enforcement by appeal to facts, may do a great good; it *has done* a good, which already has astonished the early movers in this cause; but observe, that even if the movements of temperance societies should accomplish all that they can aim to effect, if the prime, original causes of intemperance remain, unless the same operation which brought about the change be always kept vigorously active, the evil will begin again, and the same fatal process be again experienced.

You may roll back this great stream, which so long has deluged the land with poison, till its channel shall be left naked and dry as the barren rock, you may build a wall mountain high, to shut out and dam up the fatal current, but, if you leave the primitive fountains of the stream unsealed, that river of death will gather strength, and heave itself over your barrier, and dash the foundation stones to ruin.

It is in this view of my subject, that I have dwelt so much at length upon the *mental*, the *interior* process of intemperance.

Intemperance is one of a nest of vices—it is one of a progeny—it lives, it always lives in company with kindred sins—it is their provocative, their support, their cause, their effect—it lives upon other vices, other vices live upon it: the *race* must be crushed! the *family* must be made extinct!

Observe, I am not saying one word against the great remedy which temperance societies have adopted as their essential doctrine—that remedy is of course effectual, wherever and so long as it is applied—I only ask, how can men be led to adopt this remedy? How can all who use the instrument of intoxication be led to abandon it? We must find out what it is, which leads this and that man to indulge in strong drink, and then strive to uproot the cause.

1. One man drinks strong drink, because the customs of society require it of him. To meet his case, we would say, that a public opinion must be created, strong enough to break the custom. I say *created*, because it is folly to talk of waiting till public opinion shall change of itself; the minds of those few, who realize the danger, must leaven the mass of society.

You, respected friends, who in the infancy of this cause, gave your hearts and hands to the work, never anticipated such a wonderful and speedy change in the customs of society, as you witness this day. The influence of this work, the misery and sin which it has saved here amongst us, will never be fully known, till we come to read the records of eternity.

I doubt not, but that, within reach of my voice, there is more than one hoary head, which, but for the change which you have wrought, would long since have been in an unhonored grave.

I doubt not, but that there are many in this audience, whose bounding hearts and active frames testify to the healthiness and vigor both of their animal and spiritual nature, who would, but for this reform, have to-night, tottered with aching brows, and trembling limbs, and sick hearts, to a drunkard's feverish couch.

Let, then, the friends of temperance carry on this change, till the instrument of evil shall be banished by the power of public opinion; I do not mean by the tyranny of a majority, but by reaching every man's mind and conscience, and changing every man's opinion.

The full application of this remedy is in the hands of the young, and, by consequence, the great responsibility here, rests with them.

2. Another man drinks to fill up and relieve an unoccupied hour.

The idle are never secure, and it is useless to preach to them of reform in any department of conduct, till they are willing to be employed in regular and proper business.

But this is not the class which I have now in view. I would remind you again of the dangers of the unoccupied hour, when the man of business retires from his toil.

Now there are certain classes of the community, who can always find a resource for the hour of leisure,—their taste, their intellect has been so cultivated, and fortune has so blessed them, that they do not feel the need of any public institutions for relaxation and amusement. But the great mass of the people, do need that something should be done for their gratification and instruction by the public: they need to be taught how the domestic circle may be enlivened, they need to have resources of amusement and information provided for their households—public walks and gardens should be provided—libraries, lectures, and musical entertainments ought to be so easy of access, that the poorest, honest man in the community need not be debarred their privilege. Permit me to refer you, in this connection, to the views, which, one year since, were laid before this society. When the fever of speculation shall abate, our citizens will be led to give their special attention to this subject, and the better enlightened amongst us will be willing to teach the people how to enjoy this life soberly and rationally, so that at the same time, they may be preparing for a better life.

3. A third class drink simply to gratify the palate. But as this taste for strong drink is acquired, as it is an artificial taste, if the instrument of evil can be put out of the reach of the young, the dangerous appetite of course will never exist. And as to those, who have already acquired this taste, they must be reasoned with, if not upon the ground of their personal danger, by appeal to the influence of their example; and they must be made willing to deny themselves, for the good of their fellow men.

4. A fourth class drink to quench some pang of grief, or banish from the soul some grievous trouble. This temptation is very powerful,—the circumstances into which the man is brought, seem to him at the time so peculiar and so terrible, that they justify him in resorting to any remedy, any means of relief. Perhaps it is a moment of desperation, and the man without a moment's struggle, recklessly gives himself up to the destroyer.

It will be a great thing, if you can take away from such the means of intoxication; it is no slight favor, to dash the cup of poison from the suicide's lip—to take the steel out of the madman's hand;—but it would be a still more blessed thing, to lead the poor victim of sorrow to a refuge of peace within his own heart, which the world can neither give nor take away.

5. A fifth class drink, because they are ignorant of their danger. The number of such is now very much reduced, but the work of enlightening the public mind is not perfected, and therefore the friends of temperance must continue to collect and pour forth the light, the tract must wing its way toward every hamlet and into every dwelling in the land, the startling fact and the simple story must be told far and near,—till every man shall know what it is that he pours into his system, and what will be its physical and moral effect.

6. Another class drink from the love of excitement. Not to intoxicate themselves, or drown their reason, but merely to enjoy the influence of a gentle stimulation, to impart a glow to their sensibilities, and excite their organs of feeling and action. This class have accomplished one long stage in their downward course. They have launched upon the current, and it has already borne them down so far, that they have reached the rapids, and the roar of the cataract can be distinctly heard, the wreathing vapor can be seen hovering as a cloud over the abyss of ruin. They are in the midst of troubled waters, and though there may be a possibility that some intervening isle may stay their course, or some chance current carry them out of danger, confused as they are by the thunders of the tumultuous

waves, blinded as they are by the dashing spray, their peril is great.

I do not say, that the danger of such as drink for the sake of partial stimulation, is always imminent, but I would urge it upon such that they are in the stream, they are yielding to the current, and that is a current, whose motion every hour accelerates.

I would say, that the note of remonstrance, the solemn alarm must be sounded loud and long in his ear,—at midday, you must raise the telegraph to warn him of his peril and point out the way of escape,—at midnight, you must fire the beacon, that its lurid light may be shed across the rough sea, where the poor victim may perhaps be buffeting with death.

7. There is one class remaining, in whose fate we feel that too little interest has been taken, and for whose rescue but little labor has been expended; I mean, those who drink to be intoxicated.

I know that it is almost a hopeless task for the confirmed drunkard to seek to reform himself,—I know that there are very peculiar difficulties in the application of any remedy to meet his case. But ought the effort to be relinquished, are the bodies and souls of this vast band to be sacrificed without an effort to save them?

It is true, they cannot be reached by argument, you cannot frighten them by thrilling tales of horror—they could tell you from their own experience, of hours of torture, such as your fancy never conceived. You can do nothing for them, but by shutting them out from the avenues of temptation, cutting them off from the means of intoxication.

How then will you reach the man who furnishes the drunkard with his poison? With the voice of entreaty and argument? You will have the same difficulty in reasoning with him, that you had with the drunkard, and generally from the same cause. By the arm of law? You can effect much by this resort, and we would this night render thanks to Almighty God for what our legislators have already done to save the land from ruin;

but so long as there are men willing to buy, and buy freely, there will somewhere be sold the means of intoxication.

How shall the temptation to sell be taken out of the way? I answer, by taking the drunkard, the man who supports the vender, out of the community. By erecting here and there, asylums for the drunkard, not prisons, not houses of correction, but refuges, like those provided for the unfortunate maniac. Let the man be taken, in the earlier stages of his disease, and placed where his evil example shall be no longer felt, where a system of well digested and patiently applied effort shall be brought to bear upon him for the reform of his moral nature, let him be treated not as a criminal, but as an insane man, and if the vitality of his moral being be not extinct, let such employments be furnished him, such amusements be provided, such tastes be cultivated, that his sanity and power of self-control shall return, that, when it shall be safe, he may be restored to the community, clothed, and in his right mind.

It would be public economy to erect such asylums, and let the law take the matter into its own hands; let the drunkard, from regard to the public good, be placed in these refuges, and, for his own good, be kept there, till he becomes a new man.

If it comes within the scope of law to manage the drunkard's property, it would be but the exercise of its legitimate function to manage the drunkard's body.

IV. I have a word to say, before closing these remarks, in reference to the present aspect of the temperance reform.

This Society has never met, when there has been so general and deep an interest in this cause. There may be incidental hindrances to your success, there must be in every moral undertaking with which fallible man is connected; but, notwithstanding this, the principles of temperance are working their way into every class of the community, and are becoming dearer and dearer to the friends of religion and humanity. It is true, there will be those, whose severe and denunciatory spirit will injure every such cause, but the denouncer is not altogether to blame—a taste for such vituperations is spreading through the

community, and there is often too visible a satisfaction felt in listening to the harsh epithet and strong denunciation. With this feeling and mode of influence, we have no sympathy. And on the other hand, there will be those whose love suddenly grows cool, because the incidental, secondary evils, which ought to have been anticipated, frighten them from the noble work. Those too, who were enlisted in this work by the charm of novelty, may be expected to leave you; and sometimes you must encounter those, who have never had any part or lot in this matter, but are directly opposed to all your efforts.

To him who treats this cause with contempt, I would make this single appeal—if you had the power, would you dare to undo all that the temperance reform has effected? Could you reconcile it to your conscience and humanity to do this?

Who would dare to re-open the thousand gates of temptation, which have been shut? Who would rekindle the many fires of the still, which have been put out? Who would recall the former customs of conviviality, the frequent social glass, which sent so many to an untimely grave? Shall the young man do it, whose feet were well nigh gone, and who has been saved, as by fire, from the arms of the destroyer? Shall the parent do it, when his own children may be the first victims to the wretched change? Shall the Christian do it, who professes to love his neighbor as himself? Well then, let the opposer of this cause remember, that if the work ought not to be undone, it must of course be a good and holy work.

To those who are enlisted in this reform, permit me to address one or two plain cautions. Guard against division—be careful that your moral strength be not wasted in civil warfare. Let the timid be thankful that there are those, with bolder spirits than their own, ready to push themselves further into the enemy's ranks—and let the bold be thankful for what the timid are willing to do.

Guard against expecting *too much* from this enterprise, lest sudden disappointment paralyse your efforts and chill your zeal.

Guard against expecting *too little*, for he who anticipates but slight results, generally puts forth but slight exertions.

Let it never be forgotten that moral power is our proper weapon, and that the principles of Christian love ought to move as in every stage and mode of operation.

Be careful that you do not encumber and clog this enterprise, by fastening upon it false and unsound principles.

Guard against turning aside from the real, tangible evil, to fight with shadows.

Let us not be afraid of meeting on common ground, and uniting our energies for one common good, whatever difference of opinion in regard to other matters may exist amongst us. The temperance cause interferes with no man's religious opinion, it troubles itself with no questions of party interest, it stands in the way of no other system of moral influence, it robs no other society of its honors or power—shall, then, man be so fearful of his brother man, that he will not unite with him in this holy work?

And finally, let it be remembered, that a heavy responsibility rests upon those who have originated and carried forward this temperance reformation—for the result must now, however it may turn, be momentous. You have committed yourselves upon a solemn question, you have virtually pledged yourselves to the community to do a great work—you have set up a beacon on a dangerous shore, and have bid the mariner look to it for safety, and now if you let that beacon-light go out, or if you so alter its position that it shall deceive the man who looks to it for guidance, you are responsible for that man's life!

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THE TWENTY-SIXTH

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

OF THE

Massachusetts Temperance Society,

READ AND ACCEPTED

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING,

JUNE 1, 1838.

BOSTON:
PRINTED BY CASSADY AND MARCH,
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1838.

REPORT.

THE President, Vice President, and one member of the Council being either absent from the city or country for most of the past year, the duties of the Council have devolved upon its few remaining members whose other engagements have allowed them any time to attend to the interests of the Society.

The Council have no report to offer on the doings of any special agent for the past year. The agencies during this period have consisted in occasional visits to different places, of persons employed by the Council to lecture on the topics embraced by the temperance reform. It is believed that, in this way, a great deal of good has been done. The whole commonwealth has its attention strongly directed to the cause. An agency having for its principal object to bring the subject formally before every portion of the State, has been less necessary than in preceding years, while much good has and will long continue to be accomplished by expositions of its principles, and by directing public attention to the means which may be most useful in promoting its progress. This last is a topic of the greatest interest at the present moment. The cause is before the whole public. Never has it been more distinctly met by opposing interests than during the year just past, and in the succeeding year or years it may have to meet still stronger

opposition. This belongs to progress. The attention of many, who have never before given it a single thought, is attracted to it. They are frequently of the educated and wealthy classes. They are roused to the subject by the excitement concerning it, which exists around them. The first question that occurs, is, "what is this which is so deeply moving the public mind?" And the answer must come from the recorded doings of preceding years, and from what is still doing. The Council deem it an important period in the history of the cause, which shall give rise to any deep feeling of interest in the reform itself. They believe that its nature, its principles, and its practical relations, and rules, all commend it to the deepest interest and regard of every mind in every community. It does not shrink from investigation; on the contrary, it asks for, nay, demands it. If there be any thing in it which has not good, and that too, the highest, let that be shown. If its friends have been for more than a quarter of a century working in the dark,—and if the thousands and millions which have come into its ranks, have been pursuing the unreal, and wasting both time and mind on that which cannot profit, in this time of awakening interest to the cause, let all this be inquired into, and the fallacy be shown. But on the contrary, and as the friends of this cause every where believe, its basis is truth, established, incontrovertible truth, who can for a moment be indifferent to it? what sincere friend to human good can hesitate to accord to it his best wishes, and to give it whatever of aid and support that may be in his power?

In view of all that has now been stated, the Council have directed their attention the last year, and especially the last winter, to the calling together the friends of temperance in this city, and have labored by lectures and discussions to bring its most interesting topics before the community. These meetings have frequently been held weekly, in the various churches in the city, and have been uniformly fully attended. Their operations may seem to have been too local, but there were special reasons for this particular mode of action here, the last year. It

is in the city that most effort has been demanded, and it has been felt that if here the cause could be truly and firmly established, that a most important influence would come to be exerted every where else. Not but that the country is and has long been far in advance of the city in regard to the reform, is this said, but because its final triumph must depend much on the position of the city in relation to it. Farther,—the example of a great community cannot but be felt even beyond the state of which it is the capital, and a cause which has such an ally, is, by that very fact, commended to the deep attention of other and remote capitals and states. It is in the city, too, that the strong motives of interest and of habit have their greatest strength. Men are near each other. They act directly with and upon each other in all matters of interest. Face meets face, and the human voice has all its power. How important to every cause,—how important to the best, or which we think best, is it that such agencies be engaged on its side. How powerful does the truth come to be, when it has on its side whatever of moral or intellectual may be within its reach. The value of the greatest good is sometimes measured and learnt by the obstacles which lie in the way to it. Reform finds its greatest obstacle in the prevalent want of sympathy with its objects. This is often traceable to a popular want of knowledge in regard to its objects. Now this is not to be wondered at. Can it be expected that those about us who have never taken any interest in what we have most at heart, should have any true acquaintance with it. They often have none; and looking only at the nearest bearing of the subject, and that, it may be, affecting their own interest directly or indirectly, can the reformer be surprised at any measure of indifference, contempt, or opposition which may be directed to the reform for which he has so deep concern. This popular want of knowledge in regard to the cause is most likely to exist in a city. Circumstances of all kinds exist in such communities which interfere with, or in some way prevent such minute investigations concerning facts and principles which may result in true knowledge,

and years and years may pass away, nay, a new generation appear, before the truth is either apprehended, or made the rule of conduct. Notwithstanding the many efforts which have been made by the Council this last year, it may be that a small amount only of good has been accomplished. Most grateful will they be if they have done any. They will not believe that the work has been wholly in vain.

In looking back on the temperance movements of the past year, perhaps no one recurs to the Council more strongly than the new state temperance organization which has been made within that period. In the course of the summer, a communication was made to the Council by the Secretary of the Essex South Temperance Society, the Rev. Gardner B. Perry, setting forth that it was anxiously desired by that society that a new state society should be formed on the basis of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks, and asking the views of the Council in regard to this important measure. The Secretary of this Board afterwards had the pleasure of a personal interview with Mr. Perry, and the objects of the new society were distinctly made known. Mr. Perry spoke of his deep interest in the existing state society,—of the long period during which he had been enrolled among its members, and of the important position it occupied in the history of the temperance reform.

The Council acted promptly on the communication which had been made to them, and in their letter of reply, expressed personally, their sincere pleasure at every judicious attempt to carry forward the reform; but at the same time stated that in the absence of the principal officers of the society, they did not feel authorized to give an official opinion on the expediency of forming a new state society. The Council soon after received letters of invitation as delegates to a convention called by the Essex South Society, to be held in Boston, to deliberate on the formation of a new state temperance association. A large and highly respectable number of the friends of the cause met. The convention was duly organized, and a new society entitled the "*Massachusetts Temperance Union*" was made.

The convention did more than all this. It signalized itself, at once, and for all the succeeding periods of the temperance history by an act which has for its sole end the unchecked progress of the cause throughout the commonwealth. It sustained a memorial to the legislature, then in session, prepared by a member of the Massachusetts Temperance Society, which solemnly asks of the legislature the repeal of the existing license law, and the substituting for it a new law which shall prohibit the retail of intoxicating drinks. The memorialists, among whom were members of this Board and Society, were heard through their committee by a committee of both houses. A Bill was reported to the House of Representatives, was discussed in that House in the most thorough manner, and passed by more than two-thirds of the members present. In the Senate, the debate was as thorough as in the House. Many amendments were proposed; some of them were adopted, and thus amended, the bill was passed in the Senate by a much larger majority than in the House. The amendments coming to the House underwent some changes which were concurred in by the Senate, and thus the law was passed. It has since received the signature of the Governor, and become a law of the commonwealth.

The Council have given this brief account of the passage of the new license law, because they consider it to be the most important step taken by the reform. The doctrines of temperance have thus received the highest sanction of the state. The moral sentiment of the people has been formally, and collectively expressed in a law; and is not this the highest, the most dignified expression of a moral truth? By such an act the state has declared itself to be the guardian of the public morals, where these have been most easily assailed, and most deeply injured. It has made itself emphatically the friend of the drunkard by removing from him, as far as practicable, the means of drunkenness. It has diminished the temptation to become imtemperate by removing its most common causes. It has withdrawn itself from any participation in this dreadful calamity, by repealing a

law which though prohibitory in its purpose, was a public sanction to spirit drinking in its results. The state, by this act, has escaped the charge of inconsistency for punishing as crime and felony acts done during intoxication, which it publicly authorised, nay, gave licences for the public use of what produces it. In all this, the state, while it has consulted its own honor and dignity, has declared itself to be the friend and protector of the whole people.

This change in our legislation has produced various effects. The friends of the temperance reform have regarded it with sentiments of the sincerest gratitude. By some, indeed, of the friends of the cause it has been thought premature, and by others, other provisions would have been preferred. Such differences in opinion are natural. It certainly cannot be thought a very serious objection to the course the legislature has taken, that of the thousands, nay, millions which are now the open friends of the cause, differences of opinion should exist. There are many in the community who are openly opposed to the law, and to any law but that which has recently been repealed. This state of opinion has led to much discussion. The public press has almost daily contained articles for and against the new legislation. Opinions have been freely expressed, and as freely canvassed. Nobody can object to this. So far from objecting, it should be regarded with favor only. Let us have the fullest freedom of speech and of the press. Let men say what they have to say on any great measure with earnestness, with plain downright honesty. The limits of such discussion, are always settled by common sense, common prudence, principle. No man who is worthy to be listened to, or read, will ever transgress such boundaries. He may be earnest without being discourteous,—satirical without being coarse, and personal without being vulgar. Let us have discussion. If it can be with courtesy, it is to the common praise and honor, and if it be otherwise, there is but one party which was ever yet known to suffer by it.

What objections have been formally made to the new law?

It is objected, that it is a violation of natural right,—is unconstitutional, and is inexpedient. Let us consider these objections. As preliminary, one fact should be distinctly stated, and borne in mind. The law is not new to our legislation. From the earliest days in the being and history of this state, laws have been made, and submitted to, regulating the sale in spirituous liquors; nay, more, an excise has been raised upon such sale. The conditions for obtaining a license have been always fixed; much formality has been necessarily submitted to before getting one. Selectmen under their oath of office, after the fullest deliberation upon every case, have been bound to certify that the sale was for the "public good;" and that, in their belief, the person applying for a license was of good moral character. A great discretion has thus been given to those public officers, and they have always exercised it, granting a license to one, and withholding it from another. In our own city seven or eight hundred licences have been granted in one year when the city was one third less populous than now; and three or four hundred only another year; the last, for instance, with a much larger population. Here has been prohibition. Here money has been demanded and paid, and for what? For a privilege! yes, for a privilege to do what merely concerned the public good. And has this law been resisted? Has it been called an invasion, a violation of natural or political right? No, never; and why not? simply and wholly, because the exercise of the privilege was believed to promote the public order and good. Legislation, then, has always existed in regard to the matter, and, of course, any law is a legitimate portion of the whole system of our jurisprudence.

But the present law, it is objected, violates our natural and political rights. Let us next examine this most frequently urged objection. A man, and every man in every community has a right, the fullest right to use his whole faculties, and means, his mind, his body, and his estate, to promote his own best good and advantage. This is the extent and limit of human right. As it is universal, it contains within it the very con-

dition, that no man, and no body of men, have any right so to use his faculties, as obviously and necessarily to injure or harm any one else, or to prevent his whole use of his faculties for his own good. A man has no right to do what tends directly to the injury, to the weakening, or to the destroying of his own power to use all his faculties and possessions to his best moral and physical advantage. These are self-evident propositions, and would not have been gravely set down, but for the objection above made.

What says the Bill of Rights, that most important part of the Constitution of this State, and which stands first, as most vital, in the book of the law of the commonwealth?

ARTICLE I.—All men are born free and equal, and have certain natural, essential, and unalienable rights: among which may be reckoned the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property; in fine, that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness.

ART. XVIII.—A frequent recurrence to the fundamental principles of the constitution, and a constant adherence to those of *piety, justice, moderation, temperance, industry, and frugality*, and to maintain a free government. The people ought, consequently, to have a particular attention to all those principles, in the choice of their officers and representatives; and they have a right to require of their lawgivers and magistrates, an exact and constant observance of them, in the formation and execution of the laws necessary for the good administration of the commonwealth.

ART. XIX.—The people have a right in an orderly manner, to assemble to consult upon the common good; *give instructions to their representatives; and to request of the legislative body, by the way of addresses, petitions or remonstrances*, redress of the wrongs done them, and of the grievances they suffer.

The people of this commonwealth, then, may petition the legislature, nay, more, may instruct their representatives on the great subjects of individual and public wrong and grievance, and the general court may, nay, is bound to make laws for the removal of evil, and for the promotion of the whole public good. Now, intemperance is just such a case as is contemplated in granting such a power. It is an evil to the individual, and to the community. It is itself a crime, and criminal acts committed during intemperance are not the less criminal or felonious, as the act may be, because committed during intoxication. It is this fact which especially demands for the intemperate man such legislative interference by enactments, as shall remove from

him the means of intemperance. By the old law, as was before stated, the use of spirituous liquors was allowed. The law was indeed designed for restraint, but contained in its very self, permission to use what notoriously produces intemperance. The use was, therefore, not illegal. But for acts committed in intoxication the drunkard was held responsible, to the extent of being deprived of his personal liberty, and even of his life. Has not now that man a claim to such protection as law can give him, who, from whatsoever cause, has become a drunkard? May not such a man rightfully demand of the state, that it should remove from his reach, his easy reach, a licensed and legal temptation to place himself in the highest peril,—destroying, for the time, moral power, and still holding the miserable delinquent responsible. The drunkard has this right. He has sued for it in moments of release from his debasing habits. He has prayed to be delivered from this temptation, and he has hitherto prayed in vain. He has been punished,—shut up in prison,—put to forced labor,—subjected to every species of legal privation, and then has come forth to the day again, and for what? to find in every street, every by-way he may chance to take to his miserable home, open, and the freest opportunity to commit the same crime, and to be subjected to the same degrading punishment. Who that will give to such a subject a tythe only of the regard which it demands of him, can, for a moment, question the rightfulness of all moral and all legal interference to stop wholly and at once, so vast, so unmixed an evil.

The constitution of the state, and all that has been done in regard to the temperance reform, have their authority, and their foundation in this great truth,—*there are no immoral rights.* What is immoral in itself, or what leads directly to immorality, cannot be right. So obvious a truth is this, that were it not seriously objected that rights are invaded in what has been done here, it would have been little rather than solemn trifling to have stated it. Right supposes duty,—a moral obligation to do something, or not to do it. This is the essence of right. What moral obligation is there to be a drunkard, or to supply

the certain means of producing intemperance. Is it not utterly wrong to be, or to do either? Let the only true, and the highest view be taken of this matter. Let interest, and prejudice be for a moment put aside from the mind, and there can be no difference in the ultimate result to which all will arrive.

How stands the new law in regard to the laws of the United States? A state may not, by its laws, violate existing contracts within itself. A state may not contravene the laws of the United States. Over both these cases the United States law has supreme jurisdiction. The new license law is not a violation of contract. The drunkards in the state have made no contract under the sanction of a law with the makers and sellers of spirituous liquors, that they should be faithfully, and daily supplied with such liquors; nor *vice versa*, have the latter made any such contract so to supply them.

As to the second point, the infraction of the United States law. This deserves to be well considered. Much has been said to prove that our state legislation directly infringes the settled law of the land. We begin our reply to this grave charge by asserting, that the new law in regard to its relations with the law of the land, merely and solely acts to regulate the sale of spirits at retail in this state; in other words, it regulates the passage of this species of property from one person to another, just as it does the same thing in a thousand other particulars. It always has done so, as was stated before; the only and entire difference between the present and the old law being, that whereas, formerly *twenty-eight* gallons was the smallest quantity that might be sold without a license, now it is reduced to *fifteen*.

The real question of constitutionality is this. Does the state law thus viewed contravene the United States law? Has a state a right to regulate the sale, within itself, of what the United States law allows it to bring within itself from abroad? The answer to this question is found in actual practice. This state, and all the other states, do regulate such sales. The laws of this state declare what shall be the terms of disposing of such

importations in all instances where the articles imported tend directly to produce death, disease, or any direct injury to the community. The old license law was intended to be precisely of this character. The whole evil resulting from the use of spirituous liquors, as drinks, was not understood or felt, and the law was framed during the prevalent want of knowledge of their ruinous effects; ruinous as they now are known to be to the individual, to domestic happiness, to moral and intellectual progress, and producing the unmixed evils, in this use of them, of vice, pauperism and crime. But the law as it existed, was a law of restraint, framed, as it was, in the popular ignorance of the time.

Farther. The state law does more than all this. Look at the auction laws. These prohibit sales of goods, even in original packages, unless a tax be paid on such sales. In other words, levies such tax as a condition of public sale.

Again. The United States laws allow the unlimited importation of gun-powder and fire-works. But the law of this state prescribes exactly how gun-powder shall be sold, within its limits. It forbids, on pain of forfeiture, the landing of only a prescribed quantity, and directs how much may be stored at once in any one place. It absolutely forbids the keeping, selling, or even the *advertising* for sale, or the firing of fireworks, rockets, serpents, &c. without a license.

So with regard to rags. You may import ship-loads of rags from Smyrna, Italy, &c., but a most rigid police law exists as to their inspection before sale. Look, in short, at the whole system of *inspection.* What is it but an infinitely varied process of regulating the passage of property from man to man? Who now can look upon any such regulations as have the "public good" only and wholly in view, as violations of the laws of the United States, which laws grant general powers for certain business transactions, and merely for the purpose of securing *revenue?* To prevent smuggling, in other words, and thus to obtain legal means for carrying on the whole business of government. It can only be unconstitutional in any of these, and all similar cases, to *prohibit* the sale of what the laws allow to

be brought into the country. It cannot be so to regulate the ultimate disposition of them. It is objected to the new law, as unconstitutional, that the quantity allowed to be sold is greater than that in which it may be imported. The right to *regulate* for sufficient cause, is not violated by such limitation. We have seen that various articles of merchandize may be imported in any quantities, and it should here be added, certain articles in prescribed quantities only, and the reason of the law was added. How now can the regulation of quantity by a state law, for whatever purpose, contravene a law which has its whole basis in mere revenue. We have seen the operation of the auction law, in regard to original packages. When the duties are paid, and these packages, or whatever contains imported articles are broken up, the state may, by its laws, regulate the whole ultimate sale, whether in regard to cloths, spirituous liquors, &c. What is the law in regard to hawkers and pedlars? It is directly in point. It is on page 307 of the revised statutes, chap. 36. sect. 7, 8, and is quoted.

SECT. VII.—Every hawker, pedlar, petty chapman or other person going from town to town, or from place to place in the same town, either on foot or with a horse, or otherwise carrying to sell, or exposing to sale, any goods, wares or merchandize, except as provided in the following section, shall forfeit a sum not exceeding one hundred dollars for every offence.

SECT. VIII.—Any person may go about as aforesaid, selling and exposing to sale any fruits or provisions whatever, and also any goods, wares or merchandize, of the produce or manufacture of the United States, except indigo, feathers, playing cards, jewelry, and essences.

Here is not merely regulation, precise, established, but positive prohibition; and of articles, too, of daily use and necessity, and which are brought into the country under the highest legal sanction. Why, then, this legislation, and this long and willing acquiescence in it? why, but for the obvious *public advantage* which ever has, and which continues to result from it? The statute book is full of like instances illustrative of the great truth that the people of this commonwealth are fully competent to, and have the truest constitutional power and right, by their representatives, to regulate, by legislation, the mode by which property, in all its forms, shall pass from one person to another.

What was the so-often-cited Maryland law? This law pro-

vided that no one should sell broadcloths, sugar, tea, rum, &c. &c., unless he should, before so doing, pay into the treasury of the state, fifty dollars for a license to do the same. This was *prohibition*, not *regulation*. The importer was included in the operation of the law, for he could not sell in the original package, bale or what not, which the laws of the United States in allowing him to import, most fully permitted him to sell. Farther, the tax so laid was duty, it was for revenue, not a license fee for service rendered by an officer of the state, and for which service, every state has authority to demand a fee. What is the operation of the license law recently passed by this State? It exacts no tax, levies no duty, nor does it prohibit sale. It regulates quantity only. Is it unconstitutional? Does it violate the constitution either of the United States or of the State of Massachusetts? Has the legislature,—regardless of its own dignity, in violation of the oath of office administered to its members, that they in all their doings will be faithful to both these constitutions, and careless of the rights and privileges of the people of this commonwealth—has the legislature solemnly enacted a law subversive alike of those rights, and productive of evil. However petitioned,—however instructed, have they in this great and solemn matter, been faithless to their high duties?

It was observed in another part of this report, that a law in regulating the sale of spirituous liquors is not new to the legislation of this state. Such laws were enacted almost two centuries ago, and have been variously modified in the succeeding times. They were never regarded to be so perfect, as not to be altered or improved. But this historical fact is referred to for another purpose, and which it is believed contains a striking and important argument for the latest legislation. It is this. Long before the adoption of the present constitution by the United States, similar laws existed, laws for the regulation of this particular traffic. They were known to the people of this state when the constitution was adopted, and were felt to be a legitimate portion of their reserved rights. At least no objection was made to them either by the country generally or

by the people of this commonwealth. The simple fact of having so regarded them through our whole history, both colonial and independent, presents the strongest argument for the constitutionality of the new law. Like all which have preceded it, it is in no sense *prohibitory*, but altogether for *regulation*, and grows out of the long known and fully admitted power of the state to make such regulation.

In conclusion, let it be distinctly stated, that the legislation which has now been considered and defended, has been decided by the supreme court of Maine, and of this state, to be entirely constitutional.

One other objection remains for consideration. It is objected that the new law is *inexpedient*. The temperance reform is a moral reform. It has labored for more than a quarter of a century to produce moral conviction. It has met with ridicule, obloquy, and contempt through every stage of its history, and in its latest days, the present moment, it is its lot still to encounter these obstacles to its progress. It may be best that it is so. If such sentiments exist, let them be expressed. If evil comes of them, as was said before, there is only one party likely to be injured. Ridicule has long since ceased to be the test of truth, and it is now rather a question of taste than of principle, whether this weapon, in a moral warfare, is the best that might be selected. But the question of expediency is raised, and this includes others, *reaction* among the rest. We are told of commotions likely to come ; whether that these are to be produced or prevented by the warning, doth not fully appear. It comes from the opponents of the reform sometimes, and may be used by such merely or partly to aid the fulfilment of the prophecy.

The objection of expediency has been already partly considered in this report. It was endeavored to be shown, that the law, as an expression of the moral sentiment of a people, was a part, and a most important one, of a moral reform. May not the expediency of the law be inferred by the great majorities of both houses which voted for it. Is not this fact

in the history of the passage of the law, the strongest evidence of its expediency. It is the voice of the people declared by their representatives. And is not such a voice always to be heard? The argument for expediency is found in the admitted fact, that moral power alone does not, if it cannot, reach to the whole or nearly the whole of a moral evil. It must sometimes avail itself of the highest sanctions in which it can clothe itself, and when its whole agency is for good, and only for good, the highest good of the individual, and the community, who that wishes best for both can seriously question its expediency?

Can it for a moment be regarded as inexpedient for a man, or for any number of men to labor to the extent of their ability to promote their own highest moral and intellectual elevation, and to find in this desire for personal improvement in their whole condition, an aspiration for a felicity that this world cannot give? Would it in any sense be inexpedient for such men to give their time and their thoughts to whatever may have the same results for all other men, more especially for those over whom ruinous habit exerts its most fatal agency? If the simplest conviction of duty teaches the expediency, nay, the obligation on the individual so to act, in what lies the inexpediency of giving to such duty the sanction of law? a law which violates no natural right, which is approved by conscience, and confirmed by the express word of God?

The new law is farther argued to be inexpedient, because it attempts to force men into goodness. "We are not," it is said, "to be made good against our will." "A forced virtue is no virtue at all." Now, no man, not wholly profligate, can or does escape the control of a power within him, or out of him, which is superior to himself. The simplest obligation of duty,—the sense of duty in its very self, is control; so that, in the very best a man may do, he is conscious of having obeyed a law, the plain requisitions, namely, of a moral nature. But setting all this aside, what force is there put upon a man's actions by a human law which diminishes his liability to commit a crime,

whether in regard to himself or others, and thus strengthens him for the performance of all duty? The question is simply this; how far may a man or a state, consistently with what is termed natural right, and with a constitution framed for the public advantage, remove from the individual, or the community, a known cause of the extremest evil? We say *remove, take away*, for the law under discussion, proposes only to *lessen* its power. If we look for an answer to the common sense principle of all men, there can be no question what answer we shall receive; and the question is fearlessly left to this principle for its whole answer.

Finally, the new law is declared to be inexpedient because it is *premature;* it is in advance of the time, is before or beyond the popular knowledge in regard to the temperance reform.—In this, or in some other form, this objection has been much insisted on. And how may it be answered? First by facts. The temperance reform, we are told, began in New York, twenty-nine years ago. We know it began in this city, or rather in the town of Boston, *twenty-five* years ago. We know that from the society formed here, unnumbered societies have proceeded, or have followed its formation. Witness the American Temperance Society, the most efficient of all societies. Next the state societies in almost every commonwealth in the country,—then the American Temperance Union, a body of vast numbers and most salutary influence,—the Congressional Temperance Society instituted at the seat of government of the nation,—composed only of members of Congress, and numbering from among these, the moral, the gifted, the great men in the land. And lastly, the Massachusetts Temperance Union, recently formed here, and as we hope and trust, destined to do great good. And what have these societies, embracing thousands, nay, millions of the people of this broad land,—what have they been doing for more than a quarter of a century. They have been at work, day, month, and year, by agents,—by tracts,—by tales,—by meetings,—addresses, and by discussions,—in short, by using the whole moral and intellectual

ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE MASSACHUSETTS TEMPERANCE SOCIETY.

The annual meeting of the Society, for business, was held in the Common Council Room, Old Court House, Friday evening, June 1. In the absence of the President, John C. Warren, and of the Vice President, Horace Mann, Jonathan Phillips was chosen President, pro tem, of the meeting.

The records of the last annual meeting having been read, the annual report of the Council, for the last year, was presented. John Pierpont moved the acceptance of the report, which being seconded, the mover made a few remarks in support of the motion. E. T. Taylor followed in a very eloquent appeal in support of the temperance reform, and in favor of the motion before the society. Gardiner B. Perry, late agent of the Essex County Society, and Alden Bradford, next addressed the meeting. Matthew Crosby, Agent of the Massachusetts Temperance Union, proposed amendments to the report, and supported them with eloquent and appropriate remarks. The amendments were adopted, and the report accepted, and ordered to be printed.

Charles Tappan, Treasurer, presented his report for the last year, which, on motion of Moses Grant, was referred to the Council to be audited.

The report of the Publishing Committee was next read. From this report it appears, that the publications of the society

the past year, amount to three hundred and forty thousand duodecimo pages. The various works embraced in this enumeration, have been extensively and gratuitously circulated throughout the Commonwealth.

The following resolution was offered to the meeting by Charles Tappan, and unanimously adopted:

"*Resolved*, That in order to carry on the temperance reform, and maintain the high ground on which it now stands, it is expedient to raise three thousand dollars, for the employment of agents and publishing temperance documents."

Col. J. M. Fessenden offered the following resolutions which were also unanimously adopted:

"*Resolved*, That the temperance reform is a moral reform,—that through its whole history it has labored to produce moral convictions in regard to its great principles, and to make these principles the rules of practice.

"*Resolved*, That in conformity with the moral character of this cause, its friends, having by precept and by example, taught its doctrines every where, both to the individual and to communities, as they believe, have obtained for the cause the public favor, and in the States of Tennessee and Massachusetts, received for the reform the strongest expression of public moral sentiment, viz.: a repeal of the existing license laws, and the passage of new laws making the retail traffic in ardent spirits, as drink, penal.

"*Resolved*, That we regard the formation of temperance societies upon such principles as the views of different communities may deem best is to be encouraged, in the belief that an honest desire and purpose to promote temperance, must always produce good results; and in the farther belief, that, in due time, the utmost desirable conformity will be brought about.

"*Resolved*, That it is the earnest wish of all the friends of this cause, to bring every one within its happy, life-giving influence, and that they feel it to be their duty to receive into their number, every human being of whatever temperance creed, who, in a sincere desire for light and for strength, asks to be enlisted in its service.

"*Resolved*, That at no period of its history has this cause presented a stronger claim on public confidence and support, than at the present time; and that its friends are to enter upon and continue in its labors with renewed zeal, and neither to tire nor to faint, while any, the least occasion remains for their ministry. This work is a noble work, and is intimately connected with any and every attempt to promote the best progress of the human race.

"*Resolved*, That we regard the present time as singularly favorable for the adoption and practice of the principles of this reform. When was there a period in our history, when the whole circumstances of the nation were so seriously depressed—when capital in all its kinds, and industry in all its uses, were so prostrated—and when the question of remedy was so serious, and about which the answer is so fearfully perplexed? At such a time, let the friends of this cause carry forward the great work; let them interest in it the good, the wise, and the powerful throughout the land, as an institution having public virtue for its object, and public order and prosperity its surest rewards.

"*Resolved*, That this cause regards the young as its peculiar hope; that in educating them on its principles, a community will at length be formed upon whom the strong power of habit, of interest, or prejudice will have no influence—that they will revise the whole existing code of society, and form one, having for its first principle and basis, the paramount obligation of perfect temperance.

"*Resolved*, That the simultaneous meetings of the friends of temperance throughout the world, are an expression of public sentiment in regard to the reform, of deep interest and importance, and that their effect must be to promote it, by calling to its ranks such individuals and classes, as have, from indifference, prejudice, or contempt, been directly or indirectly opposed to its progress."

Gardiner B. Perry offered the following resolution, which was also adopted:

"*Resolved*, That we view with much satisfaction, the praiseworthy example of those persons, who have at any time, and some quite recently, relinquished the traffic in ardent spirit."

In support of this resolution, the mover spoke of instances in which the traffic had been abandoned. One, he said, had particularly interested him. A person with whom he was well acquainted had long sold ardent spirits, as drink, and had defended the sale on the ground of law alone. It was legal to sell, and what was legal was right; nay, he urged the ground of duty as requiring him to sell spirits. But, said he, when the law was changed, I at once gave up the traffic. I was resolved to be consistent, and what I had done under the sanction of law, I resolved at once, not to do, when the law was repealed, and I have sold no spirits since. This instance is a very important and a striking one. It shows a fixed purpose to be governed in a matter of supposed great interest, by the law of the state; a purpose as honorable as it was wise.

The following resolution was offered by Moses Grant, in order to carry into effect the first resolution :

" *Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed to collect, by subscription, the sum of three thousand dollars, for the purposes of the society the ensuing year."

Moses Grant, W. W. Stone, and H. Edwards were chosen this committee.

The society was next organized for the succeeding year as follows :

JOHN C. WARREN, PRESIDENT.
JONATHAN PHILLIPS, VICE PRESIDENT.
WALTER CHANNING, SECRETARY.
CHARLES TAPPAN, TREASURER.
SAMUEL DORR,
MOSES GRANT,
STEPHEN FAIRBANKS,
HENRY EDWARDS, } COUNSELLORS.

Few meetings of the society have been more interesting than the one of which the above is a brief record. Every one present manifested the deepest concern for the success of the cause in support of which they had come together. Every thing that was said, showed the strongest confidence in its final success. It was in its truth that this confidence was seen to have its growth, and with this principle for its sanction it *must prevail.*

The following votes were then passed by the Council.

" *Voted*, That the thanks of the society be presented to the Rev. T. M. Clark, for his eloquent and appropriate discourse pronounced before the society at its anniversary meeting, Sunday evening the 27th of May, and that a copy be requested for the press.

" *Voted*, That the thanks of the society be presented to the committee of the Old South Church, for the prompt and very liberal manner with which they have ever complied with the request of the Council, to grant them the use of the church, for the anniversary meeting."

A vote of thanks was passed for the voluntary and very acceptable service rendered the meeting by the organist and choir of the church on the same evening.

WALTER CHANNING, *Secretary.*

Boston, June 4, 1838.